



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

February 25, 2020

To: Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Opposition of SB 964 - Agriculture - Hemp Research and Production - Prohibitions**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony opposing SB 964. This bill would remove the ability for the Maryland Department of Agriculture to issue a permit to grow hemp on a farm that is within 2 miles of a residential community of 10 or more residents. This restriction would be for both the hemp pilot program and the regular farm program that was approved in the 2018 Farm Bill.

This bill circumvents the county land use system and is in direct conflict with the Right to Farm Law in Maryland. State law clearly states that farm operations will not be found as a private or public nuisance based on sight, noise, odors, dust, or insects resulting from the operation. Industrial Hemp is an agricultural crop and should remain covered under the right to farm laws in Maryland.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy:

- We support responsible and workable actions designed to permit and protect the privilege and rights of farmers, commercial fisherman, and aquaculturalists, to produce without undue or unreasonable restrictions, regulations or harassment from government or the private sector.
- We support the right of Maryland farmers to grow hemp as an agricultural crop.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU RESPECTFULLY OPPOSES SB 964

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colby Ferguson'.

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396